

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for reducing an electrical power consumption of a CPU, comprising:

returning the CPU to a normal operation state, from a sleep state, at regular intervals when the CPU is placed in the sleep state;

outputting an abnormality detection clear signal from the CPU to a monitoring circuit; and

making reference to an input signal transmitted from an external device to the CPU to place the CPU in the sleep state at a time other than a time when reference is made to the clear signal and the input signal, wherein reference to an output of the clear signal and the input signal, and an output of only the clear signal, are repeated at regular intervals and at a predetermined frequency when the CPU has returned to the normal operation state from the sleep state.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined frequency of the output of only the clear signal is set to be greater than the predetermined frequency of the reference to the output of the clear signal and the input signal.

3. An electronic apparatus, comprising:

a CPU that is selectively switched between a normal operation state and a sleep state in which an amount of electrical power consumed by said CPU is reduced, said CPU being returned to the normal operation state at regular intervals when said CPU is placed in said sleep state, said CPU periodically outputting an abnormality detection clear signal to a monitoring circuit and making reference to an input signal transmitted from an external device to said CPU that places said CPU into said sleep state at a time other than when reference is made to said clear signal and said input signal; and

a signal generation device that references an output of said clear signal and

said input signal, and an output of only said clear signal, at regular intervals and at a predetermined frequency when said CPU returns to said normal operation state from said sleep state.

4. The electronic apparatus of claim 3, wherein said signal generation device sets said frequency of said output of only said clear signal to be greater than said frequency of said reference to said output of said clear signal and said input signal.

5. A recording medium, comprising:

a power consumption reduction program executed by a CPU, said power consumption reduction program including:

a first task that functions to return said CPU to a normal operation state at regular time intervals when said CPU has been placed into a sleep state, said first task instructing said CPU to output an abnormality detection clear signal to a monitoring device;

a second task that makes reference to an input signal transmitted from an external device to said CPU to place said CPU in said sleep state at a time other than when reference is made to said clear signal and said input signal, after said clear signal is outputted from said monitoring device; and

a third task that references an output of said clear signal and said input signal, and an output of only said clear signal, at regular time intervals and at a predetermined frequency when said CPU returns to said normal operation state from said sleep state.

6. The recording medium of claim 5, wherein said third task sets said predetermined frequency of an output of only said clear signal to be greater than said predetermined frequency of said reference to said output of said clear signal and said input signal.

7. A method for reducing an amount of electrical power consumed by an electronic unit, comprising:

placing a CPU associated with the electronic unit into a sleep state upon an occurrence of a predetermined event;

periodically returning the CPU to a normal operation state, from the sleep state, for a predetermined period of time; and

determining whether the electronic unit is to perform a predetermined task when the CPU is returned to the normal operation state for the predetermined period of time.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the determining comprises making reference to an input signal transmitted from an external device to the CPU to place the CPU in the sleep state at a time other than a time when reference is made to a clear signal and the input signal, wherein reference to an output of the clear signal and the input signal, and reference to an output of only the clear signal, are repeated at regular intervals and at a predetermined frequency when the CPU has returned to the normal operation state from the sleep state.

9. The method of claim 8, further comprising periodically outputting the clear signal from the CPU to a monitoring device.

10. The method of claim 8, further comprising setting the predetermined frequency of the output of only the clear signal to be greater than the predetermined frequency of the reference to the output of the clear signal and the input signal.

11. The method of claim 8, further comprising making a period for reference to the input signal longer than a period required for the output of the clear signal.

12. The method of claim 8, further comprising setting a predetermined ratio for a frequency of the reference to the output of the clear signal and the input signal

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the predetermined ratio is greater than 0 and less than 1.

15. The recording medium of claim 5, wherein the recording medium
uses a storage device.